

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF KINGSBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, QUAY HOUSE,
AT 7.00 P.M. ON TUESDAY 10 MARCH 2020**

Present: Cllr Anne Balkwill (Chairman)
Cllr Philip Cole
Cllr Helen Cope
Cllr Martina Edmonds
Cllr Barrie Fishman
Cllr Mike Jennings
Cllr Steve Mammatt
Cllr Chris Povey
Cllr Graham Price
Cllr Peter Ralph
Cllr Paul Vann
Cllr Julia Wingate

In Attendance: County Cllr Julian Brazil
District Cllr Denise O'Callaghan
Tom Ladds, Kingsbridge & Salcombe Gazette
Twenty Two Members of Public
Martin Johnson (Town Clerk)

19/154 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Dena Bex, District Cllr Susan Jackson and Kingsbridge Neighbourhood Police.

Public Open Forum

Members of public made the statements at Annex A.

19/155 REPORTS FROM POLICE, DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL AND SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

155.1 Insp Nicky Baker had forwarded a Police report and Cllr Balkwill read out the salient points:

- Sgt Jim Timmis had now started with the Kingsbridge Neighbourhood team.
- Looking at the 12 month picture, total crime was down by 14% by end February in comparison to the previous year.
- There had been a significant 40% drop in burglary (dwelling and non-dwelling) and criminal damage had reduced by 20% however, violent crime (non-injury) had increased by 29%. Many of the latter crimes were linked to a domestic setting.
- In February 2020 crime was down 33% on January with only 38 crimes reported.
- In summary, Kingsbridge is a really safe place to live.

155.2 County Cllr Brazil reported that Devon County Council's (DCC) council tax had been increased by 3.99%; 1.99% for general services and 2.00% for adult social

care. The overall increase had been maintained at this level for the previous 3 years. However, the recent inclement weather as having an effect on the highways. There had been a complaint about the condition of the public footpath in front of the Rivermaid housing development and the rights of way officer would investigate. A sink hole at the bottom of Church Street would be investigated with cameras as water was pouring out on the surface; the local highways officer was visiting the following day. Road closure signage in the town centre referred to works further along the A379 at Stoke Fleming. Affordable housing had been an issue for years and the word had been hijacked as 20% less than open market value was still unaffordable. It required radical thinking and a good example was an ongoing development in his own village where a 2 bed home would cost £130k and a 3 bed home would be £165k with local occupancy restrictions for those with a connection to Chivelstone, Chillington and East Prawle. He was also conscious that right to buy could have a negative impact.

He then answered Members' questions:

- Works actioned by utility companies was followed-up by DCC to ensure that pavements and highways were repaired correctly.
- He was aware of highways signage at the Belle Hill housing development which was potentially hazardous.
- There was some resistance from DCC officers regarding the proposal to extend the 20mph speed limit further up Belle Hill.
- DCC intended to form a county wide Citizens Assembly to combat climate change; people would be contacted randomly and 100 would be selected to work up an action plan for Devon.

155.3 District Cllr O'Callaghan reported that South Hams District Council (SHDC) had received the results of the recent Ropewalk public consultation with 61% of people voting for housing on the site. A housing scheme would be worked up in principle which would be required to be compliant with the Joint Local Plan. She had arranged a meeting with the heritage officer and KTC Members to consider the condition of the Kings Arms Hotel; planning permission for re-development expired in late 2020. SHDC's Development Management Committee had Deferred the planning application for the K5 development site off West Alvington Hill for several reasons and was awaiting feedback from the developer. Parking permits were likely to be increased in price however, while there were issues in Dartmouth and Salcombe there may not be much change in Kingsbridge. People could not apply for new permits could renew them however, a permit may be issued in an emergency. The CVS grant had been re-instated at £10k subject to submission of satisfactory accounts. Funding at £400k would be made available to communities for climate change projects however, a simple method was required to make disbursements. A fence had blown down in Duncombe Park and a modern replacement had been proposed; liaison with the Town Bowling Club was required.

She then answered Members' questions:

- She was also pleased that tree planting had taken place and maintenance had been earmarked around the head of the estuary.
- She would ascertain what action was being taken with the large stump of a tree which had fallen recently during high winds in the Recreation Ground.

- She would request an update about Church Steps passageway which had been closed for circa 2 years; the Town Clerk would forward historical information.

19/156 URGENT BUSINESS

The Chairman agreed to consider one item of urgent business: Coronavirus (Covid-19).

19/157 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

19/158 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the council meeting held on 11 February 2020 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

A positive response had been received from Cllr Judy Pearce, SHDC Leader, to the Chairmen of KTC and the Neighbourhood Plan's recent letter and was available on the Council Chamber notice board for sighting.

19/159 PLANNING COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and adopt the Resolutions in the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 3 March 2020.

19/160 FLOOD AND WINTER RESILIENCE COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and adopt the Recommendations in the minutes of the Flood & Winter Resilience Committee held on 25 February 2020.

19/161 CLIMATE CHANGE AND NATURE EMERGENCY

Members received a report which addressed the latest thinking on climate change and its global impact, the significance for Kingsbridge being a coastal town, the impacts on nature, the work undertaken by KTC to date and a draft 10 point action plan. It was then **RESOLVED** to declare a climate change and nature emergency and to develop a rolling Action Plan alongside partners and the Kingsbridge community at Annex B.

Extinction Rebellion Kingsbridge and Area were keen to assist KTC in progressing its Action Plan.

19/162 TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

162.1 Kingsbridge Aspirations. Cllr Judy Pearce, Leader of SHDC, replied on 19 February to KTC & Chairman NPlan's letter dated 11 February which reported shared aspirations for Kingsbridge; the importance of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan for Kingsbridge, West Alvington & Churchstow; and a request for SHDC/KTC

discussions about the development site at Ropewalk on completion of the public consultation.

162.2 Temporary seating – Fore Street. An unwanted private bench from Welle House Gardens had been repainted and replaced a time-worn bench in Fore Street outside the Roman Catholic Church. This was a temporary measure until KTC's public realm project progressed.

162.3 Potholes. Members were requested to notify the Town Clerk/Reception of potholes around town for KTC to action repairs. KTC could not action the A379 Plymouth, Cookworthy, Ilbert, Promenade and Embankment roads, the A381 West Alvington Hill nor primary roads through town i.e. Fore Street, Stentiford Hill, Duncombe Street, Waterloo Road, Belle Hill, Belle Vue Road, Church Street and Bridge Street. However, every other public road can be repaired as long as the pothole was less than 300mm wide x 40mm depth. To date the listing included access to Quay House/Texaco Garage, Kingsway Park/Ropewalk, Mill Street and Frogmore Terrace (near Waverley Road).

162.4 New SHDC waste collection routine. SHDC/FCC would move to a new scheme with boxes replacing the current bins in September 2020. SHDC officers had met with the Town Clerk that morning to witness current collection routines in Fore Street, Church Street and Ebrington Street to gauge how much recycling, bagged waste and seagull bags was placed out on the street. A potential issue was whether the new boxes would be returned to properties by homeowners or left out on the street until the evening or later. SHDC would explore a solution and feedback.

162.5 Empty shop window painting. KTC continued to engage with a local mural artist and owners of former YMCA shop, 11s Bakery and Fulfords. It was anticipated that the artwork would commence before end March.

19/163 REPORTS ON MEETINGS OF OUTSIDE BODIES AND AUTHORITIES/AGENCIES

163.1 South Hams District Council's Development Management Committee 12 February. Attended by several Members and the Town Clerk. Cllr Bex had made a statement on behalf of KTC; speaking against planning application 2434/18/ARM for a housing development at the K5 site off West Alvington Hill. The committee Deferred a decision and requested further information on a range of matters from the developer.

163.2 Pavillion in the Park working group 27 February. Attended by Cllr Price and the Town Clerk. The group was progressing its feasibility study for a community hub in the Recreation Ground and a further meeting had subsequently taken place to view the condition of the current Cottage with a local architect.

163.3 SHDC/KTC public realm improvements/pocket park meeting 2 March.

Attended by Cllrs Cole & Povey, MeiLoco landscape architects and the Town Clerk. SHDC officers had been receptive to KTC's overall ambitions but requested a scheme to mitigate the loss of potentially 10 in number parking bays in Fore Street Car Park.

163.4 Love Your Park meeting 4 March. Attended by Cllrs Balkwill & Price and KTC staff. Plans were progressing for the event to be held on Sunday 23 August and Members thanked Laura Cregan in Reception for all her hard work to date.

163.5 Kingsbridge inaugural Sports Hub meeting 6 March. Attended by Cllr Price and the Town Clerk. The meeting had been arranged by a local resident and cricket, football, rugby, tennis clubs were represented alongside SHDC. Clubs would review the Kingsbridge Open Space, Sport & Recreation plan and it was anticipated for further meetings to follow.

163.6 Salcombe TC/KTC community land trust meeting 9 March. Cllr Povey, Richard Benton, Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and the Town Clerk had met the directors of Salcombe Community Land Trust and held a very worthwhile discussion. The directors had handed a huge amount of valuable information to KTC.

163.7 Kingsbridge, West Alvington & Churchstow Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group 9 March. Attended by Cllrs Balkwill & Edmonds and the Town Clerk. It was anticipated to produce a draft plan by September 2020.

19/164 FINANCE – PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

Members received a schedule of payments due to date 10 March 2020. It was **RESOLVED** that the payments amounting to £11,007.29 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

19/165 BUSINESS BROUGHT FORWARD: CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Members received information from the Neighbourhood Watch regarding Covid-19 which highlighted the protection of isolated and vulnerable members of the community. It was **RESOLVED** to produce a precis of the Neighbourhood Watch Covid-19 advice and to signpost practical guidance to the Kingsbridge community via Facebook, website and notice boards.

19/166 QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIRMAN

None.

19/167 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

Not required.

**19/168 ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR/CHAIRMAN FOR MAYORAL YEAR
2020/21**

It was **RESOLVED** to elect Cllr Jennings as Town Mayor/Chairman for mayoral year 2020/21 and for him to take office at the Annual General Meeting to be held on 12 May 2020.

The meeting closed at 8.50 p.m.

..... Presiding Chairman Date

Annex:

- A. Public Open Forum.
- B. Kingsbridge Climate Change and Nature Emergency – Action Plan.

Public Open Forum

1. Steve Arblaster stated that Kingsbridge Area Food Bank acknowledged that the people's choice in the recent SHDC Ropewalk Consultation was housing. The group felt that the town should ensure the correct housing mix was achieved at the site including self-builds. For their own customers he queried whether one was able to care for the environment when you had no food to eat.
2. Steve Arblaster then read out a statement from Carolyn Schofield, Chairman of the Cornelius Fund, who queried whether it was possible to have a constructive debate about the provision of affordable rented accommodation. Many people in Kingsbridge were currently unable to escape difficult relationships or a life of sofa-surfing owing to the lack of an alternative.
3. Fiona Arblaster read out a statement on behalf of Steve Arblaster, trustee and volunteer at Kingsbridge Area Food Bank, who commented that it was possible to volunteer in 2 ways. Firstly, by undertaking fundamental tasks such as making the tea and filling food bags however, there was also a second way to try and make someone's life better. Talking to Food Bank clients and seeing them smile was a success. Many of them had no one else.
4. Fergus Mitchell, ecologist and father of 3, represented Extinction Rebellion Kingsbridge and Area (XRK). He acknowledged central government's deadline to vastly reduce carbon emissions by 2020 and cited statistics which highlighted the negative aspects of climate change e.g. 200 species became extinct every day. KTC's consideration of a climate and nature emergency was timely as SHDC had agreed £400k towards climate change projects. Cllr Vann had drafted a 10 point action plan, there were 120 local members of XRK, the group was willing to offer support to KTC and the mobilisation of the wider community was required.
5. Gary Joliffe stated that he was keen to become involved in a self-build group which could develop the SHDC owned site off Ropewalk in an eco-conscious way.

Cllr Balkwill thanked all members of public for their well-considered statements and made the following comments:

- KTC has tried hard to influence the amount of affordable housing and actual housing mix for recent developments in Kingsbridge e.g. K5 site at West Alvington Hill.
- She was dismayed at the lack of social care across the country which was shameful and had led to the introduction of Food Banks.
- A discussion could be held on the potential for self-build housing at the SHDC site off Ropewalk.
- Cllr Judy Pearce, SHDC Leader, response to recent KTC/Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group lobbying had been positive and she felt that SHDC was listening.
- The role of KTC as a small council was to try to influence as best possible.
- KTC supported the local Extinction Rebellion group and Cllr Paul Vann would be addressing the proposal for a climate change and nature emergency

during the council meeting. It was essential the local community also looked after its own backyard.

Kingsbridge Climate Change and Nature Emergency – 10 Point Action Plan

- 1. Low Carbon Energy Use by Kingsbridge Town Council (KTC):** Ensure that KTC is purchasing all its energy from renewable sources and that all its lighting is lowest energy. Campaign for other organisations/householders to do likewise (part delivered)
- 2. Extensive Flower Bed Creation:** Continue/expand the national exemplar delivery of such by the Kingsbridge in Bloom team with a major focus on insect life.
- 3. Planning Policy on Minimising Energy Use in New Build:** Work with South Hams District Council to require leading approaches to minimising energy use in new build/conversion schemes (also a Neighbourhood Plan intent).
- 4. Electric Cars (and Bikes and Boats):** Establish an Electric Vehicle Hub including the provision of even more electric charging points and considering a possible Electric Car Sharing Scheme and possibly a Community Electric Bus Scheme? (Neighbourhood Plan proposes much of this).
- 5. Renewable Energy Generation on Existing Buildings:** Push for town-wide delivery of roof-top solar PV schemes starting with the largest well-placed roofs first i.e. Quayside Leisure Centre, Tesco and Kingsbridge Community College (action already underway).
- 6. Arrange and host a Climate Market:** Energy saving products, local only produce (wide variety), local wildlife groups, electric vehicle promotion? (action already underway on this).
- 7. Tree Planting/Carbon Capture:** Identify tree planting potential in and around Kingsbridge (including by engagement with landowners) and support tree planting days involving local schools/other groups to deliver, estimate 100 trees a year initially, perhaps rising to many hundreds per annum (initial site already proposed and 'Orchard Town' idea mooted).
- 8. Tackling Fuel Poverty and Climate Change Together:** Establish a **Kingsbridge Air Travel Offset Fund** to support an insulation/lower energy use scheme for those in need.
- 9. Kingsbridge Climate Action Promotion Scheme:** Promote local businesses that are taking action and can help/encourage others to do so.
- 10. Art Promoted Action:** Support action through community artwork using KTC facilities, empty shop windows and engagement with Extinction Rebellion Kingsbridge and Area.